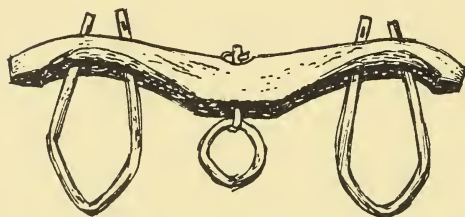


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Address By

MR. ARTHUR M. SMITH

OF DEARBORN

President, Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table of Michigan

Before

Joint Convention of the Michigan

Legislature

February 13, 1958

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Lincoln Room

Foreword

BY

HON. LOUIS C. CRAMTON

State Representative from Lapeer County

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate and House of Representatives of Michigan:

Abraham Lincoln was born on the 12th day of February, 149 years ago in a frontier cabin with one window and a dirt floor, and through this Joint Session of its legislative bodies, the state of Michigan today pays tribute to this pre-eminent World figure ever to be revered as democracy's exemplar.

We are fortunate to have with us a notable Michigan authority on Lincoln, Mr. Arthur M. Smith, of Dearborn, President of the Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table of Michigan, who will address us on the subject "Lincoln and Michigan".



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Lincoln and Michigan

Mr. Cramton, Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, Members of the Senate and House and friends:

Abraham Lincoln was born 149 years ago yesterday. He lived but 56 short years. For 21 years of this time he was at home, the dutiful son of what today we call "an underprivileged family". In the remaining 35 years of his life he was to become the symbol of America in the hearts of millions here and abroad. Today we pause in a troubled world to pay homage to his memory. It is altogether proper that we should do so, for Abraham Lincoln symbolizes as does no other historical figure the triumph of a man and his ideals over his environment and the partisan struggles of his time.

The Legislature of Michigan is to be especially commended on this splendid custom of meeting in joint convention to commemorate the anniversary of his birth. I am very honored, indeed, to have been asked to address you today on the subject, "Lincoln and Michigan".

The able speakers on like occasions in previous years have given you inspired word pictures of Abraham Lincoln the man. These addresses, supported by scholarly research have been executed with admirable skill. Today I shall not attempt to duplicate these efforts. Instead, I shall speak to you about Abraham Lincoln the inventor and Abraham Lincoln the statesman—because in both capacities he was so closely associated with Michigan backgrounds.

As an inventor Abraham Lincoln made it his lifelong habit to "inquire into the nature of things". He exhibited what he called "the habit of invention"; the "habit of observation and reflection". As a statesman he relied upon these "observations and reflections" as he formulated those policies which preserved the Union in his time and which can save the world in our time.

Today the world needs leaders who like Lincoln are both inventors and statesmen. As inventors they can observe and reflect upon the technology which has given us jet planes, radio, radar and television. They can see more than destruction in the release of atomic energy. Space to them is more than a tactical weapon in an unrelenting war of ideologies. Probing the world about them, inventors specialize in doing the "impossible". They have vision. They have a will to do. They have initiative.

When the knowledge and skills of the inventor are combined with the attributes of statesmanship, realistic political policies will emerge—policies which the world must have very soon if mankind is to survive.

Abraham Lincoln blended the mind of the inventor with the skills of the statesman in such perfect proportions that he stands today as the one great American to whom we can turn for timely inspiration, counsel and guidance.

Here is the secret for the growth of the so called "Lincoln Cult". There are many students and collectors of Lincolniana in Michigan who, in common with other members of this "Cult", share the sentiment recently expressed by the eminent director of the Lincoln National Life Foundation of Ft. Wayne, Indiana, Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry.

"Abraham Lincoln", says Dr. McMurtry, "seems to take hold of people as no other historical character does. He is someone they can tie themselves to. He possessed a true nobility of character, yet he was like the rest of us in so many human ways. We feel that we really know him. Yet Abraham Lincoln remains a paradox; * * *".¹

Michigan met Abraham Lincoln as an inventor in 1848 when he looked upon our "beautiful peninsula" from the deck of the Lake Steamer "Globe". Michigan met Abraham Lincoln the statesman when he addressed the Kalamazoo rally of Young Republicans for Fremont in 1856. This combination of inventor and statesman is indeed a "paradox".

Rumor and speculation has it that Lincoln in his lifetime also appeared at Bay City, Pontiac and Detroit. These visits have not been verified by acceptable proofs. In common with every Lincoln student in Michigan, I would like to see these visits verified. As of today, however, we know nothing about the reasons for such alleged visits nor do we know anything about Lincoln's part in them.

Despite the fact that other States were more fortunate in their contacts with Abraham Lincoln during his lifetime, Michigan today possesses a rich store of Lincoln materials and has made significant contributions to recent Lincoln studies. Thomas I. Starr found the long lost Kalamazoo speech and made it available to Lincoln students. He also published his historical researches on Lincoln and the Detroit river. Bruce Catton, noted author on Lincoln and Civil War themes is a native son of Petoskey. Carl Sandburg wrote his masterful "War Years" while living at Harbert. Valuable collections of Lincolniana are located at the Clements Library in Ann Arbor, in the Burton Historical Collections at Detroit, and in the Dwight B. Waldo collection at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo. There are, in addition, a number of privately owned collections of Lincoln materials in Michigan, several of which are nationally known.

One of the best publicized bits of Lincolniana in Michigan is the Logan County Courthouse in Greenfield Village. Henry Ford, born two years before the death of Abraham Lincoln, was, like Lincoln, both an

inventor and a statesman. We know him best as an inventor but I am sure history will also know him as a statesman. The careful restoration of the Logan County Courthouse and the choice Lincoln items collected by Henry Ford reveal the close philosophical kinship which existed between these two inventor-statesmen.

There is a strong urge to tell you more about these fascinating aspects of "Lincoln and Michigan" but they are a part of another story. Let us then return to the two episodes previously mentioned—Lincoln's visit to Michigan as an inventor in 1848, and his visit to Kalamazoo as a statesman in 1856.

In Kalamazoo in 1856 Lincoln said the key to the greatness of America was that "Every man can make himself". Here is the philosophy of Abraham Lincoln, the self-reliant inventor. But at the same time Abraham Lincoln, the statesman, added the qualification that such a man must be free; free that is from both physical and mental shackles and must be living in a Nation, such as America, in which the government assures him the freedoms which he must have if he is to "make himself".

This blending of the philosophic inventor with the practical statesman in Abraham Lincoln provided the leadership which was extolled by Woodrow Wilson in his Chicago address at the centennial celebration of Lincoln's birth. Then as now we can join in Wilson's fervent plea, "God send us such men again".²

The balanced combination of inventor and statesman in Abraham Lincoln is not unique in American history. Before his time it had been possessed by Benjamin Franklin, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Possessing it, each had blended an inventor's vision with practical statesmanship to leave to this Nation the political philosophy and the structure of government so revered by Abraham Lincoln.

I have told you that Michigan first met Abraham Lincoln as an inventor. As a first term congressman from Illinois, Lincoln returned from Washington to Springfield by way of the New England states and the Great Lakes. In the early Fall of 1848 he visited Niagara Falls and embarked at Port Buffalo as a passenger on the Lake Steamer "Globe". The "Globe" "reported" at Detroit on September 29, 1848.³ A story in the Detroit Free Press the next day recounts that the steamship "Canada" in going down the river "on Thursday night" had run ashore on Fighting Island "and was there" when the "Globe" came up.

Here then was the spectacle—two great steamers in a great river—one passing safely to its destination, the other aground on a shoal. What visions this must have conjured in Lincoln's memory! What reflections this observation must have inspired! Here was a need. Here was a problem. Lincoln had had a personal, first hand contact with the problems of river navigation. He had once floated a flat-boat stuck on the Rutledge dam in New Salem by the simple expedient of securing an auger from the shore and drilling a hole in the end of the boat which

extended over the dam. This had allowed the water to drain out of the boat, and so increased its buoyancy that it floated over the dam after which the hole was plugged, and the boat continued on its trip to New Orleans.

Obviously, such an expedient was not possible with a Great Lake steamer trapped on the shoals off Fighting Island. There was no place to transport the cargo or passengers. There was no way to lighten the load. Lincoln must have closely observed the activities of the crew of the "Canada" in wedging under the sides of the gunwales, empty casks, barrels and even bales of straw to increase the buoyancy of the ship and float her off the shoals.

Lincoln reflected on this problem and decided to do something about it. When he returned to Springfield, he described these events to his partner "Billy" Herndon who in after years was to write *that Lincoln, continued to think about this problem of riverboat navigation. As a result, he suggested attaching a "kind of bellows" on each side of the hull of the craft just below the waterline.** By a system of ropes and pulleys, whenever the keel grated on the sand these bellows were to be lowered to the water and inflated and thus buoyed up the vessel was expected to float clear of the shoal.

When Lincoln reached home, Herndon tells us that, "he at once set to work to demonstrate the feasibility of his plan. Walter Davis, a mechanic having a shop near our office, granted him the use of his tools, and likewise assisted him in making the model of a miniature vessel of the arrangement as above described. Lincoln manifested ardent interest in it. Occasionally, he would bring the model in the office, and while whittling on it would descant on its merits and the revolution it was destined to work in steamboat navigation".⁴ This model is now preserved and can be seen in Washington at the Smithsonian Institution.

Gains Paddock, an old resident of Springfield, remembered that when the boat model was completed, Lincoln, to prove his assertion that the Sangamon River was navigable, demonstrated his boat in one of the public watering troughs in the public square at Springfield.⁵

This invention was no passing fancy with Lincoln. When he returned to Washington early in 1849, he took the model with him and secured the services of a Washington Patent Attorney, Zenos C. Robbins. The model was filed, an application for patent was made, and on May 22, 1849, Abraham Lincoln was granted U. S. Patent No. 6,469.

Many Lincoln scholars have ignored these events, or have treated this invention as something of a curiosity. This I am unwilling to do.

*Herndon incorrectly tells the story as involving the "ship Lincoln was on". There is no record of the "Globe" having been involved in this episode except as passing the stranded "Canada".

**This is also incorrect. Both the model and the patent show the bellows to be above the water line.

From an intimate professional association with inventors for nearly 32 years, I know that an inventor will not carry an idea as far as did Abraham Lincoln unless he is sustained by some broader vision. In all cases, the invention patented is but a means to an end—a mechanism, if you please, to give reality to a vision.

I am certain that Lincoln must have had a broader vision which caused him shortly after the war-threatened first inaugural, to think about his boat model and to have one of the Patent Office employees find it for him.⁶

What, then, can we say now, nearly 110 years later, motivated Abraham Lincoln, the inventor to make this invention? Part of the answer to this question is found in the platform upon which he waged his first campaign for the State Legislature. Even at that time he had promised to work for improvement of the rivers. Lincoln was first of all a riverman who knew rivers from years of first hand contact with them. He knew what rivers had meant to him. He knew them as nature's right of way to places where man wished to go. He knew the shallow streams which led to the greater rivers. He knew these great rivers as they joined the cities, villages and peoples of the separate States and territories into one great and united Nation. He knew the need for transportation to the West. I believe he saw in the western rivers and in his little boat a ready answer to the problem of western exploration and western expansion.

Certainly, to a river man of Lincoln's experience, vision and ability, the Detroit river with a great steamship fast on a shoal presented a challenge to his inventive mind. That his solution may have been impractical is beside the point. He had demonstrated what he was later to call the habit of invention; that is, the habit of "observation and reflection".⁷

The river boat is but one example of Lincoln's scientific abilities. In the Lincoln Museum in Washington, D. C., there is a model of a small wagon which is attributed to Abraham Lincoln as the inventor. To date his inventorship has not been documented. If it can be established, then Abraham Lincoln was fully twenty years ahead of the art in his development of the type of vehicle steering which is common in the automobiles of today and in which each front wheel turns about its own spindle.

Many who knew him said he was a man of a decided scientific bent of mind. Dr. Joseph Henry, one of America's greatest scientists, came to know Lincoln well by serving as his "scientific advisor" during the Civil War, and said that he "marvelled at the President's grasp of scientific matters".⁸

Recently, I was privileged to examine the original longhand statement of Dr. John Allen which is now preserved as a part of the Robert Todd Lincoln collection in the Library of Congress. I was interested to note that this long time friend of Abraham Lincoln had written in 1860,

that Lincoln's mind was of a "metaphysical and philosophical order", and that Lincoln had made geology and other sciences a special study. Dr. Allen also comments on the fact that Lincoln, "has an inventive faculty—is always studying into the nature of things".⁹

"Behind the solemn, furrowed countenance of Abraham Lincoln was an inquisitive mind," writes Benjamin P. Thomas in his foreword to the recent book "Lincoln And The Tools of War". "It ranged" writes Thomas, "over the abstract and the infinite, the absolute and the immediate. It was philosophical, and at the same time was intensely practical".

"On the practical level" Thomas continues, "Lincoln's curiosity directed itself, among other things to mechanical devices". Thomas quotes a fellow lawyer of Lincoln's who remembered that whenever Lincoln encountered a new piece of farm machinery on his rounds of the old 8th Circuit, "he would carefully examine it all over, first generally and then critically; he would sight it to determine if it was straight or warped; and if he could make a practical test of it, he would do that; he would turn it over or around and stoop down or lie down, if necessary, to look under it; he would examine it closely, and then stand off and examine it at a little distance; he would shake it, lift it, roll it about, upend it, overset it, and thus ascertain every quality and utility which inhered in it, so far as acute and patient investigation could do it".

"*** Living on the periphery of the machine age in America," Thomas observes, Lincoln "was keenly aware of the technological advances that were taking place about him. He pondered on the impact of those advances on mankind".¹⁰

After reviewing Lincoln's interest in the mechanical arts to provide superior arms for the North, Thomas writes: "That many of these devices failed does not mean that Lincoln was naive or absurdly a visionary. In many instances he was on the right track but simply ahead of his time".¹¹

In today's frenzied race to train "scientists", let us remember that "crash" programs in scientific education may give us technicians but they cannot give us inventors or statesmen. For this we must train students in the fine art of "observation" and allow them the time necessary for "reflection". While necessary to inventors, both are essential for statesmen*.

Lincoln's abilities as an inventor become of added significance when they are blended with his skills as a statesman. The inventor's habit of "observation and reflection" gave a special quality to the statesmanship of Abraham Lincoln which the distinguished historian, Allan Nevins, comments on in "The Statesmanship of the Civil War". "The

*See, "Man is Not Primarily a Fact"—Dr. Glenn Olds—Saturday Review Feb. 15, 1958, p. 18.

special quality of Lincoln's statesmanship", says Allan Nevins, "was its extraordinary realism or practicality". Dr. Nevins then points out that what set Lincoln apart from other statesmen of his time was "his grasp of what was practicable at any given moment".¹²

It was as such a statesman that Abraham Lincoln paid a visit to Kalamazoo, Michigan, on August 27, 1856. There, on that day, Lincoln delivered his address "Against Extending Slavery" and demonstrated how much he had "observed" and how much he had "reflected" upon the problems of that time. Here he was playing the role of a statesman. Standing before a large gathering, billed as a "foreign" speaker, he was to be "tested" as he faced an audience made up mainly of the more enthusiastic and radical elements of the new Republican Party.

As we now read his Kalamazoo speech, we see how patiently and how skillfully Lincoln there developed those fundamental positions which he was to state more fully and more eloquently two years later in 1858 in his "House Divided" speech at Springfield, Illinois, and still again two years later in 1860 in his Cooper Institute speech at New York City.

What he "observed" at Kalamazoo must have been the subject of much "reflection" by Abraham Lincoln, the statesman.

To many in the crowd at Kalamazoo, Abraham Lincoln was nothing but a name—they had come to hear the Battle Creek Glee Club and bands from Detroit, Ann Arbor, Jackson and elsewhere. They had come to hear their idol "Zack" Chandler declare, "Let Kansas come in as a slave State and the North will make it a desert".¹³ The majority of the crowd echoed the sentiments of George C. Bates who declared that day, "Sooner than see another foot of slave territory added to the Union," he would "dash it to atoms". "Sooner", said he, "than to have the ship of state carry a crew of slave-holders, let her go down with all aboard".¹⁴

The crowd at Kalamazoo, as the crowds later were to do at Gettysburg and at the Second Inaugural, listened but did not comprehend the message of Abraham Lincoln, the statesman.

In his Kalamazoo address, Lincoln, the statesman, recognized the problems then before the people. He saw the dividing lines formed between the slave States and the free States; between the North and the South; between the abolitionists and the supporters of slavery. He knew this division threatened the Union.

Recognizing these things in his speech at Kalamazoo; sensing that he was not speaking the sentiments of the crowd; Lincoln, the statesman, urged the crowd to forget these differences and join him in the most important issue of all; the preservation of the Union. Lincoln, the statesman, saw this as the only course if this Nation was to achieve the destiny which he was certain a Divine Providence had planned for it.

In his speech in Kalamazoo, Lincoln urged all to "come forward", and help to maintain the constitution "for" said Lincoln, "it is the only safeguard of our liberties".

Lincoln then concluded, "Come, and keep coming! Strike, and strike again!" "So sure as God lives", he said, "the victory shall be yours".¹⁵

The Kalamazoo Gazette reported that "Mr. Lincoln *** made a very fair and argumentative address, but was far too conservative and Union-loving in his sentiments to suit his audience".¹⁶

Lincoln, at Kalamazoo, had not yet attained the stature of a national spokesman on these issues. This was yet to come in the "House Divided" speech, the Lincoln—Douglas debates, and finally in the acclaim with which the audience received his speech at Cooper Institute. In Kalamazoo, Abraham Lincoln was, at best, a successful lawyer and something of a local politician from a neighboring State. He was just beginning to be noticed as a national figure. There were those in the audience at Kalamazoo who remembered him as the politician whose devastating attack in 1848 on the venerable Lewis Cass¹⁷ had been a deciding factor in defeating Michigan's only bid to place one of its sons in the White House.

There also were those in the audience who, like "Zack" Chandler, were offended by Lincoln's conservative views, and who were to become so openly hostile to Lincoln that four years later they were to hold the Michigan delegation for Seward when Lincoln was nominated for the Presidency.

I doubt if many in the crowd in Kalamazoo appreciated that they were observing the early flowering of Lincoln as a statesman. Yet, it was truly a statesman who proclaimed to the crowd:

"We are a great empire. We are eighty years old. We stand at once the wonder and admiration of the whole world, and we must inquire what it is that has given us so much prosperity, and we shall understand that to give up that one thing, would be to give up all future prosperity. This cause is that every man can make himself".¹⁸

Lincoln, the statesman, also spoke of our "deep and abiding interest" in keeping the territories open for homes of free people. "There is another thing", said Lincoln, "and that is the mature knowledge we have—the greatest interest of all. It is the doctrine, that the people are to be driven from the maxims of our free Government***".¹⁹

The vision, the thoughts and sentiments of Lincoln, the statesman, at Kalamazoo find further expression in his "House Divided" speech. Remembering the problem of so expressing them as to reach his audience in Kalamazoo, we find Lincoln, the inventor, suggesting certain technical analogies and arguments based thereon which lie at the very heart of the "House Divided" speech.

It is Lincoln as a technician, an inventor if you please, who suggests the analogy of the sand casting mold and the frame timbers²⁰ to support so effectively the conclusions of Lincoln, the statesman, in the "House Divided" speech that the combination of the Nebraska doctrine and the Dred Scott decision was an effective "machine" for the extension of slavery.

The close knit fusion of the inventor and the statesman in Lincoln is seen also in his lecture on "Discoveries and Inventions" given before the Phi Alpha Society, of Illinois College in Jacksonville, Illinois, on February 11, 1859.²¹

If time permitted, I should like to take you through this entire lecture for I believe it has a great deal of significance in the Lincoln story. One noted Lincoln scholar told me a few days ago, "That is the speech of a well educated man". Coming as it does between the "House Divided" speech and the "Cooper Institute" speech it shows the scope of Lincoln's interests and the intellectual growth which was to become so apparent in the "Cooper Institute" speech.

Let us turn our attention to some of the significant portions of this speech which reveal Lincoln as an inventor and as a statesman.

"I have already intimated my opinion," said Lincoln, in this lecture, "that in the world's history, certain inventions and discoveries occurred of particular value, on account of their great efficiency in facilitating all other inventions and discoveries". These included among others the discovery of America, and the introduction of patent laws.²²

After considering the problems in the inventing of writing, Lincoln saw it as a means of recording and preserving important observations, thus possibly leading "to an important invention, years and even centuries" later. "In one world", said Lincoln, "by means of writing, the seeds of invention were more permanently preserved, and more widely sown".²³

Lincoln was concerned about the inequality felt by uneducated peoples; about how such people looked upon the educated few as "superior beings". "To emancipate the mind from this false and underestimate of itself", said Lincoln, "is a great task which printing came into the world to perform".

He then speaks of how difficult it is "for us, now and here to conceive how long it took to break its shackles" in order, as he put it, "to get a habit of freedom of thought, established". "It is", said Lincoln, "a curious fact that a new country is most favorable—almost necessary—to the emancipation of thought, and the consequent advancement of civilization and the arts".²⁴

After reviewing the course of invention through Asia and the older countries, this lecture continues on a very modern theme. " * * * we here in America", said Lincoln, "think we discover, and invent, and

improve, faster than any of them. They may think this is arrogance; but they cannot deny that Russia has called upon us to show her how to build steamboats and railroads".²⁵

To Lincoln, the discovery of America was "an event greatly favoring and facilitating useful discoveries and inventions".²⁶

The "strong slavery of the mind" which concerned Lincoln in this speech, had to be broken before "freedom of thought" could be established. America was the new country so necessary to this "emancipation of thought".

This, then brings us back to Kalamazoo and to the "great empire" whose cause he there stated as being, "that every man can make himself".

Lincoln's message at Kalamazoo, and his lecture at Jacksonville, Illinois, have particular applicability to the dilemma of free men in our troubled world today. Last November, Howard Fast, after leaving the Communist Party, wrote an article, in which he stated:

"Whatever the Communist Party once was, today it is a prison for man's best and boldest dreams. Tomorrow belongs to those who break down the prison walls that enclose the minds of man, not to those who support such walls. For mankind, the promise of tomorrow always has been and always will be the widening of intellect and horizon—in ever greater vistas of individual freedom".²⁷

The mental slavery as well as the physical slavery demanded by Communism was abhorrent to the mind of Lincoln. The Communist ideology can exist only so long as it can forge and hold its subject peoples in the shackles of mental and physical slavery. Lincoln's concern about extending slavery into free territories as he expressed it at Kalamazoo, was "that the people are to be driven from the maxims of our free government". Today, I am certain his concern would be directed toward Communism—and this for the same reason—that it drives people from the "maxims of our free government".

The voice which spoke through Abraham Lincoln in stating this issue at Kalamazoo still speaks to us today, but we must listen closely if we are to hear it above the noise and clash of ideologies and the shoutings of rabid partisans seeking to separate man from man and Nation from Nation.

The voice today, as it did in the time of Abraham Lincoln comes from the soul of a great man who is a scientist, dedicated to serving "God's lowliest creatures", and living today in primitive surroundings, beside a river which he knows well. He speaks to us today against a frontier background. With a belief in God, and a devotion to the cause of all mankind Albert Schweitzer has given us a philosophy for today and tomorrow in his "Reverence for Life", and last year in his "Declaration of Conscience". In these writings I hear not the voice of

Albert Schweitzer—nor the voice of Abraham Lincoln—but the voice of a Divine Providence again speaking patiently to us, to caution, to direct and to inspire us in the never ending search for a solution to our problems of survival, in a world terrified by what yesterday were but scientific curiosities discovered in its course of man's unrelenting search for knowledge.

I believe it is symbolic of our times that today replicas of the sculptured busts of Abraham Lincoln and Albert Schweitzer sit side by side in a showcase in the Smithsonian Institution at Washington.

We need to understand the great principles and the idealism of these great thinkers if we are to profit from their example.

Turn your ears to Lambarene in equatorial South Africa, or to Gunsbach in Alsace-Lorraine when Albert Schweitzer is there. Listen as he speaks. You, too, can hear the voice. It is the voice we heard speaking through Lincoln at Jacksonville and at Kalamazoo but the words are Albert Schweitzer's:

"A man's ability to be a pioneer of progress", says Schweitzer, "that is, to understand what civilization is and to work for it, depends on his being a thinker and on his being free.

"Material and spiritual freedom are closely bound up with one another" Schweitzer asserts and then says, "Civilization presupposes free men, for only by free men can it be thought out and brought to realization".²⁸

Lincoln the inventor—Lincoln the statesman—gave us the vision, gave us the courage and gave us the leadership which enabled this Nation to survive the tragedy of the Civil War and to become a world power dedicated to the principle that people are not to be driven away from "the maxims of our free Government". As an inventor, Abraham Lincoln supported other inventors in developing the War-born technology of the Civil War from which has grown the awesome technology of today whose imperative voice demands that we firmly establish here and now the principle stated by Lincoln speaking as a statesman in Kalamazoo; that peoples shall not be driven from "the maxims of our free Government".

John Wilkes Booth cut short the life of Abraham Lincoln just 41 days after the second inaugural. It is one of the ironies of history that Abraham Lincoln, the inventor and statesman, could not have lived to see and to have directed the conversion of the many War-born inventions into devices for the peace-time uses of all mankind. Lincoln, the inventor, and Lincoln, the statesman, would have seen in this a vision come true—a Nation strong and united; a Nation dedicated to the principles of freedom.

In his writings, Abraham Lincoln, the statesman, fixed a course of freedom for this Nation and for all "other Nations so conceived and so dedicated".

Denied in life the opportunity to see the Nation strong and physically united, Abraham Lincoln, the inventor, still had one last role to play.

The crowds which viewed his funeral car; the throngs which saw the train bearing the body of the beloved leader from Washington to Springfield, Illinois, viewed all that was mortal of Lincoln in a setting, new and strange to them. The car which carried the body of Abraham Lincoln on this last journey was the "Pioneer", the first luxury sleeping car built by George M. Pullman.²⁹ Appropriately, this car was drawn by a locomotive named the "Union".³⁰

Lincoln, the inventor, would have been pleased to know that the railroads along the funeral route, in order to accommodate this new car, had to lay many miles of standard gauge track; widen their bridges and cut down their station platforms. This sad last journey supplied the impetus necessary to force standardization of tracks and equipment on the railroads of America.

Thus, even in death, Abraham Lincoln, inventor, dreamer, prophet and statesman played an important part in achieving his vision of a Nation closely knit together.

Yes, the persistence of Lincoln, the inventor, has been rewarded. His beloved United States of America became united with the rails supplementing the rivers to join all of its parts into one great and indivisible Union. The little river boat of 1849 had been Lincoln's dream of one means to achieve this end. But the inventor of the boat became a prophet of the rails.

The eminent Lincoln scholar, the late James G. Randall, in "Mr. Lincoln" published posthumously last year, supports the picture of Abraham Lincoln as an inventor-statesman.

"Abraham Lincoln of Illinois", Randall says, "made it his business in the period preceding his Presidential nomination to emphasize the peace-time pursuits of his country and to recover for his own day some of the Nation building stimulus of the fathers". "He was concerned with problems of slavery", Randall continues, "and with such a handling of those problems as would allay strife, as he hoped, but this was not all. He turned his thoughts also to discoveries and inventions, to the 'iron horse', to 'hot water power' harnessed to help mankind, to the '70 or 80 thousand words' of the English language to influences that tend to 'bring us together' and 'make us better acquainted', to the harvest machine and the 'steam plow', to the problem of 50 bushels of wheat to the acre".³¹

In passing, may I here express the hope that as the forthcoming Civil War Centennial is observed in Michigan, the planning commission proposed in pending Senate Bill 1111 will focus public attention on these peace-time pursuits of Lincoln's day and emphasize the way in which the citizens of Michigan worked with the citizens of the other States to

recover the "Nation building stimulus of the fathers" as the "swords" of the Civil war were beaten into the "plow-shares" of the peace which followed.

Today, our science and technology, also born of a great War, have forced upon us new dimensions of time and space and wholly new concepts of energy. There were no "Sputniks" in Lincoln's time; there were no intercontinental ballistic missiles; there were no atom bombs; there were no "H" bombs. There were, however, grapeshot and shrapnel; explosives; gases and fire. The rifles of the Civil War had neither the range nor the awful destruction of a modern rifle. The cannons of that War had neither the range nor the frightfully destructive powers of a guided missile. The observation balloons and the crude electro-magnetic telegraph of the Civil War were a far cry from the jet bombers, the space platforms, the radar and the radio of the present age. Yet, as in all wars, all these things had this in common: they are used to kill young men; they are used to maim young men, and their use in war will solve no problems.

Today, we have the power, not only to kill and maim our enemies, but we can inflict our wrath on generations yet unborn. Upon all the generations of mankind yet to come we can inflict the terrible burdens of genes permanently damaged by the lethal rays of our atomic bombs. The inventors of the world have given us this power. With such power comes responsibility—the responsibility of world leadership.

If we are to learn but one lesson from our past history, it is that the gracious hand of an all knowing Providence has guided and directed the affairs of this great Nation through devoted and dedicated leaders, such as Abraham Lincoln, divinely inspired to accomplish, in the darkest moments of despair and gloom, the task of keeping faith in America and in keeping faith in those ideals which have made this country great.

Abraham Lincoln, the inventor; Abraham Lincoln, the statesman, has given us the pattern for such a leader. Michigan is proud today that Abraham Lincoln found here the inspiration for his invention of the river boat; the birthplace of the Party which elected him to the presidency; and the platform that day over 100 years ago, in Kalamazoo, from which emerged Abraham Lincoln, the statesman.

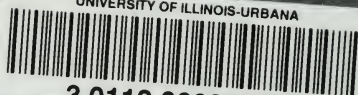
"God send us such men again".

FOOTNOTES

- 1) Saturday Evening Post—Page 92—"The Lincoln Cult" by Charles W. White.
- 2) Centennial Address of Dr. Woodrow Wilson, Chicago, Illinois, February 12, 1909, as quoted in Lincoln Lore #659, November 24, 1941.
- 3) The Detroit River and Abraham Lincoln—Thomas I. Starr. Bulletin of the Detroit Historical Society—Volume III—Nov. 5, February 1947.
- 4) Abraham Lincoln, Herndon & Weik—2 Vol. Edition D. Appleton & Company 1926. Volume I—Page 298-299.
- 5) Lincoln Lore #843, June 4, 1945 "Congressman Lincoln's Patent".
- 6) Sights and Secrets of the National Capital by Dr. John B. Ellis, Published Jones, Jenkin & Company, Chicago, Illinois—1869, Page 348.
- 7) Lecture on "Discoveries & Invention"—The Collected Works of Lincoln. Roy P. Basler—Rutgers University Press. 1953—Vol. III—Page 356.
- 8) Quoted by Benjamin P. Thomas in the Foreword to "Lincoln And The Tools of War" by Robert V. Bruce—Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc. 1956. Page X.
- 9) Robert Todd Lincoln Papers. Vol. I—Page 10. Library of Congress.
- 10) Lincoln and The Tools of War, Supra. Page VII-VIII.
- 11) Ibid. Page IX.
- 12) The Statesmanship of the Civil War—Allan Nevins—The MacMillan Company. 1953. Page 60.
- 13) Kalamazoo Gazette. August 29, 1856 as quoted in Starr-Lincoln's Kalamazoo Address against Extending Slavery. Page 31.
- 14) Ibid.
- 15) Starr—Lincoln's Kalamazoo Address—Pages 45-46.
- 16) Ibid. Page 42.
- 17) Lincoln's remarks on Cass may be found in Clifton M. Nichols "Life of Abraham Lincoln"—Most, Crowell & Kirkpatrick (1896) Page 107 et seq.
- 18) Starr—Supra. Page 39.
- 19) Starr—Supra. Page 39.
- 20) Quoted from Page 165 "The Life of Abraham Lincoln" by J. G. Holland—Published by Gurdon Bill, Springfield, Mass. 1866.
- 21) The Collected Works of Lincoln—Roy P. Basler—Rutgers University Press 1953, New Brunswick, New Jersey. Vol. III, Page 356.
- 22) Ibid.
- 23) Ibid.
- 24) Ibid.
- 25) Ibid.
- 26) Ibid.
- 27) "On Leaving The Communist Party" by Howard Fast—Saturday Review, November 16, 1957. Page 15.
- 28) Albert Schweitzer—"Decay"—Page 16—Reprinted Page 5. Albert Schweitzer, an Anthology—The Beacon Press—1947.
- 29) S. Giedion, Mechanization Takes Command.—Oxford University Press, New York 1948—Page 453.
- 30) Holland, supra. Page 530.
- 31) Mr. Lincoln—James G. Randall edited by Richard N. Current, Dodd, Mead & Company. New York, 1957. Page 3.



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